

Appl. No. 09/945,146  
Amendment dated July 22, 2004  
Reply to Office action of May 18, 2004

Remarks/Arguments

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 27-28 and 31. Although applicant disagrees with the rejection, independent claims 1 and 29 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 27-28 and 31, respectively, in order to expedite allowance of the present application. Applicant makes this amendment without prejudice and reserves the right to pursue broader coverage.

Claims 22-26, 29, 30, 32, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,394,817 ("Asada") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,660,200 ("Nakajo"). In light of the amendments to the independent claims adding the allowable subject matter of claims 27-28 and 31, applicant submits that this rejection is moot. Accordingly, applicant requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 be withdrawn.

Applicant submits that the amendment clearly places the claims into condition for allowance and no further consideration or search is required. Accordingly, applicant requests that the amendment be entered pursuant to 37 CFR 1.116.

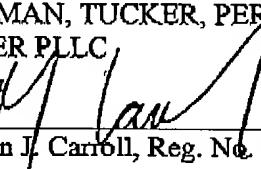
Applicant believes that this paper is responsive to each and every ground of rejection cited by the Examiner in the Action dated May 18, 2004 and respectfully requests favorable action in this application. The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-2121 (Reference Number MNRES-001XX).

Respectfully submitted,

GROSSMAN, TUCKER, PERREAULT &  
PFLEGER PLLC

By:

  
Kevin J. Carroll, Reg. No. 36,384

Date: 7-22-04

55 S. Commercial Street  
Manchester, NH 03101  
Telephone: (603) 668-6560  
Facsimile: (603) 668-2970